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ABSTRACT

After studying the testing and remedial programs used in Florida's public schools, the Task Force on Educational Assessment Programs presented its findings and recommendations. Findings are reported regarding: the schedule for implementing the testing program (which requires that students pass the Functional Literacy Test before they may graduate from high school): public and professional reactions to the testing program: the test's name: the importance of academic as opposed to practical life skills: the test's validity in predicting life success: problems in testing exceptional students: cultural bias: consistent testing procedures: and test validity related to appropriate curriculum content. A brief review of remedial programs is included, as is a brief comparison of 1977 and 1978 test scores. Recommendations are addressed to four main concerns: (1) eliminating unfairness and communication problems-- including changing the time of testing and the test's name: (2) promoting early learning and diagnostic testing: (3) improving test quality and emphasizing items which test basic skills: and (4) monitoring remedial programs by the state department of education. Forty-one behavioral objectives, a bibliography, and a list of task force participants are appended. (GDC)

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COMPETENCY TESTING IN FLORIDA REPORT TO THE FLORIDA CABINET PART I

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FEBRUARY 20, 1979

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TM800 013

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February 20, 1979

The Honorable Ralph Turlington
Commissioner of Education
The Capitol
Tallahassee, Florida 32301

Dear Commissioner Turlington:

In compliance with the charge by the Florida Board of Education, I respectfully submit to you Part I of the Report of the Florida Task Force on Educational Assessment Programs.

During the last several months, the Task Force has studied the testing and remedial programs used in Florida public schools. Part I of the report contains the Task Force's findings and recommendations. Later, the Task Force will submit Part II of the report, which will analyze the results of the October, 1978, testing and evaluate the effects of the remedial programs.

To produce this report, the Task Force undertook an enormous quantity of work in an extremely brief span of time with the assistance and cooperation of many people whom I wish to commend.

The fifteen members of the Task Force, whose names appear on this letter, repeatedly gave much of their time traveling to different parts of the State for public hearings and Task Force meetings. Consultants, who are listed in an appendix, also willingly gave of their valuable time to provide oral and written expert testimony to the Task Force.

Many members of the State Department of Education provided valuable assistance and information to the Task Force. I want especially to acknowledge the

cooperative efforts of Mr. William Cecil Golden, Dr. H. B. Pinkney, Mr. Carey E. Ferrell, Jr., Dr. Thomas H. Fisher, and Mr. Philip Rountree and their staffs.

My former staff in the Secretary of State's office, particularly Dr. James E. Mengel, Mr. Sy Holzman, Mr. James S. Hensley, and their staff, was especially helpful at many stages of the Task Force's assignment.

Dr. Kenneth Henderson, Ms. Sylvia Collins, Ms. Betty Oates, Ms. Mary Stevenson, and Mr. Stuart Weinstein ably surveyed various local schools and counties throughout the State. Thanks should go especially to the students, faculty, and school administrators from Bay, Calhoun, Collier, Charlotte, Dade, Gadsden, Hamilton, Hardee, Hendry, Hillsborough, Leon, Liberty, Orange, Sarasota, Seminole, and Taylor Counties for their cooperation.

Dr. Ernest Burkman, Executive Director of the Task Force and Professor at Florida State University, determined and designed the procedure to be used by the Task Force and, with the assistance of his staff, drafted this report. Dr. Lois Wilson edited the report and supervised its production.

Special thanks must go to Dean James L. Gant of the Florida State University, College of Education, and President Bernard F. Sliger of the Florida State University for granting permission for Dr. Burkman to work with the Task Force.

Many other people were essential to the Task Force throughout its study, and my appreciation and thanks go to them all.

Sincerely,

Jesse J. McCrary, Jr.
Chairman

JJMcC:bac

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Cover designed by Cheval Fagan; photograph by Robert M. O'Lary/*The Tallahassee Democrat.*

INTRODUCTION

For years, the public has been alarmed over the declining competence of American high school graduates. In particular, there has been concern that some students graduating from high school appear to be unable to read a newspaper, write a simple letter, or do basic mathematics.

In 1976, the Florida Legislature reacted to this concern by passing the Educational Accountability Act of 1976. The Act expanded the testing program that had been conducted by the State Department of Education and increased the importance of the program. Specifically, the law required that the State test all Florida public school students in grades three, five, eight, and eleven for their reading, writing, and mathematics skills. These tests have been titled the *Basic Skills Tests*. The 1976 law also mandated that the State administer a test of "functional literacy" to all public high school students and that, beginning in 1979, students must pass this test, as well as meet all other requirements, in order to receive a standard high school diploma. (*Functional literacy* was later defined for testing purposes as "the ability to use reading, writing, and computation skills in real-world situations.") This test was originally named the *Functional Literacy Test*, and it was decided to administer it in the eleventh grade and to allow those students who did not pass it to retake it in the twelfth grade. (In 1978, the State Board of Education renamed the eleventh grade *Basic Skills Test* the *State Student Assessment Test, Part I* and the *Functional Literacy Test* the *State Student Assessment Test, Part II*. For convenience and clarity in this report, however, these tests will be referred to by the original titles – eleventh grade *Basic Skills Test* and the *Functional Literacy Test*.)

To meet the new functional-literacy testing requirement, the State Department of Education had to move very quickly. In less than two years, the Department identified the skills to be measured on the *Functional Literacy Test* and constructed a new two-part test (communications skills and mathematics skills) designed to measure those skills. By the fall of 1977, the Department of Education had also established passing scores for the test and had set up a statewide system for administering the test and for reporting results.

The new *Functional Literacy Test* was administered for the first time in October of 1977 to all eleventh grade students then enrolled in Florida public schools. When the results were in, it was found that, overall, 63% of the students had met the passing standards that had been set and 37% did not. Broken down by race, 22% of black children who took the test passed as compared with 75% of white children.

The fact that a large number of students failed the test, and especially the disproportionate number of black students in that category, created an immediate storm of controversy. Charges were made that the test was culturally biased, that the scoring standards were improper, and that the administration of the test by the State was illegal. The controversy led to lawsuits, and public debate of the pros and cons of the minimum-competency testing program was spirited.

In August of 1978, the Florida Cabinet, sitting as the State Board of Education, heard testimony from numerous citizens on several issues related to the minimum-competency testing program. The session stretched to nine hours and culminated in a decision to continue the testing program during the 1978-79 school year, but with minor changes in the scoring system. In addition, the Board directed Commissioner of Education Ralph Turlington to appoint a Task Force on Educational Assessment Programs to study the minimum-competency testing program and

especially the *Functional Literacy Test*. The Task Force was to report its findings and recommendations to the newly constituted Board of Education in early 1979.

The Task Force was organized in September of 1978 and, in consideration of the time available, quickly made two decisions. First, we decided to concentrate our attention upon the functional-literacy testing program where most of the controversy has centered and to spend less time on the basic-skills testing program. Second, since complete data on fall 1978 testing will be unavailable until the spring of 1979, we decided to divide our report into two parts. Part I (this section) focuses upon general problems and an analysis of the events through October of 1978. Part II will present an analysis of the results of the testing done in October of 1978.

In carrying out the work for Part I of its report, the Task Force gathered data from three sources – public hearings, expert testimony, and brief studies and surveys. During the public hearings in Clearwater, Orlando, Fort Lauderdale, Fort Myers, Jacksonville, and Panama City, seventy-eight parents, educators, administrators, school-board members, interested laypersons, and students made oral statements to the Task Force regarding the testing program. (Appendix 1 lists these speakers and their affiliations. Transcriptions of the public hearings have been filed with the Commissioner of Education.)

Invited oral testimony was also taken from Department of Education staff members and from recognized experts in testing and measurements; remedial instruction; instructional design; educational policy; the teaching of reading, English, social studies, math, and science; resource allocation; school administration; and special education. (Appendix 2 lists the names and affiliations of those who testified.) In addition, written reports on relevant topics were prepared by experts, interested professionals, and the Task Force staff. (Appendix 3 lists these. These reports and transcriptions of the invited oral presentations have been filed with the Commissioner of Education.)

As this part of our report is being completed, preliminary results of the fall 1978 administration of the *Functional Literacy Test* are beginning to be available and made public. We feel that this information has little meaning until careful analyses can be made, and so we have chosen to defer extensive comment on it until later. Part II of our report will focus on the results and their meaning. Until this and other analyses are available, we urge caution in drawing conclusions regarding the 1978-79 test results.

SECTION A: RECOMMENDATIONS

The Task Force supports the general concept of State-administered competency testing and recommends that the testing program be continued. However, we believe that the effectiveness and efficiency of the program can be improved. This section of the report spells out the actions that we recommend to achieve that improvement. The findings and implications that led to the recommendations are presented in Section B.

1. ELIMINATING UNFAIRNESS AND MISCOMMUNICATION

a. We support the concept of the differentiated high school diploma, but, to prevent unfairness to present twelfth graders, we recommend postponement for one year, until 1980, the withholding of high school diplomas on the basis of *Functional Literacy Test* scores. (See pages 4 and 5 and pages 9 and 10.)

b. To insure fairness and to increase effectiveness, we recommend that the system for scoring the *Functional Literacy Test* be further revised effective with the 1979-80 school year. Specifically, we suggest that the test be administered annually to successful adults and the results used in setting passing standards. (See pages 7 and 8.)

c. To give schools and students more time to correct deficiencies, we suggest that the administration point for the *Functional Literacy Test* be moved from the eleventh grade to the tenth grade effective with the 1979-80 school year. Along with this change, we recommend that the present eleventh grade *Basic Skills Test* be discontinued. (See pages 13 through 15.)

d. To correct present awkwardness and misunderstanding, we recommend that the name of the *State Student Assessment Test, Part II (Functional Literacy Test)* be changed to *Florida State High School Competency Test* effective immediately. (See page 5.)

e. To insure that exceptional students are not penalized as a result of the competency testing program, we suggest that the procedures for identifying and classifying exceptional students be reviewed and that steps be taken to insure that prospective employers and the public do not confuse the Certificate of Completion with the special diplomas to be awarded to exceptional students. (See page 8.)

f. Since the current Florida competency tests meet usual standards for nonbias in testing, we recommend that the procedures that are currently used to remove cultural bias from the tests be continued. (See page 9.)

g. We recommend that existing security and administration procedures be reviewed and that county school officials take steps to insure that established procedures are followed. (See page 9.)

h. Since many factors influence test scores, we recommend caution in drawing any conclusions about comparisons between 1977 and 1978 *Functional Literacy Test* results before complete analyses have been made. (See page 16.)

2. **PROMOTING EARLY LEARNING AND TESTING OF COMMUNICATIONS AND MATHEMATICS SKILLS**

   a. We feel that basic skills need to be learned early. To improve the chances for students that this will happen, we recommend the launching in 1979 of a five-year coordinated, statewide research and development effort to upgrade the teaching of fundamental communications and mathematics skills in kindergarten through sixth grade. (See pages 12 through 15.)

   b. To further facilitate the learning of basic skills, we recommend that the present basic-skills testing program be adjusted in the following ways. (See pages 12 through 15.)

      (1) Statewide diagnostic tests of reading, writing, and mathematics skills should be given in second and fourth grades.

      (2) At the end of the sixth grade, the *Primary Competency Test*, a test based on State standards for reading, writing, and mathematics skills, should be given.

      (3) Students failing the *Primary Competency Test* at the end of sixth grade should be given remedial instruction and additional opportunities to pass the test in seventh and eighth grades.

      (4) Students who have not passed the reading and writing parts of the *Primary Competency Test* by the end of the eighth grade should be denied promotion to the ninth grade. Those failing the mathematics part of the test should be promoted but remain in special remedial mathematics courses until the skills are acquired.

3. **CONTENT AND FORM OF THE *FLORIDA STATE HIGH SCHOOL COMPETENCY TEST (FUNCTIONAL LITERACY TEST)***

   a. The Task Force expects that its recommendations regarding early learning and testing of basic skills will greatly reduce the number of entering high school students who lack basic communications and mathematics skills. When this occurs, we recommend that the focus of the *High School Competency Test* be broadened to include areas other than basic reading, writing, and mathematics skills. (See pages 13 and 14.)

   b. We recommend that the present policy of focusing the *Functional Literacy Test* on life skills be reconsidered. In particular, the feasibility of focusing the test on academic skills should be considered. (See pages 5 through 7.)

   c. Until our recommendations regarding early learning of basic skills are implemented, we recommend that immediate attention be given to the following:

      (1) The form of the test items should be broadened to include items other than multiple-choice types. In particular, the assessment of writing skills should actually require the student to write a passage. (See page 6.)

      (2) The objectives for both the communications and the mathematics parts of the test need to be improved in terms of their precision and the degree to which they sample the mathematics and communications skills that citizens are actually called upon to use in life. In this regard, we suggest a change in present procedures for validating objectives. (See pages 6 through 8.)

      (3) The difficulty levels of the communications and mathematics tests should be assessed and probably adjusted. We suspect that the 1977 mathematics test was

too difficult and that the 1977 communications test was not difficult enough. (See pages 7 and 8.)

(4) Continued research needs to be done regarding the technical quality of all tests. (See page 6.)

4. REMEDIAL INSTRUCTION IN BASIC SKILLS

The Task Force considers the current efforts to upgrade the basic skills of students after they have failed the *Functional Literacy Test* to be temporary measures that should be rendered unnecessary by improved basic-skills teaching in the early grades. However, until such teaching is in effect, we recommend that the remedial program be continued and that the following steps be taken to improve its implementation. (See page 10.)

a. The State Department of Education must take a more active role in monitoring the quality of county remedial programs. Every county should be visited by Department of Education representatives at least once a year. (See pages 10 and 11.)

b. Steps need to be taken to insure that other important school programs are not damaged as a result of a county's efforts in remediation. In this regard, the Department of Education should monitor statewide student competency in all of the standard curricular areas. Monitoring should include periodic statewide testing of students and on-the-spot program evaluation in these areas. (See page 12.)

c. The Department of Education should facilitate cooperative efforts among counties to build and implement effective remedial programs. A possible first step in this regard would be the establishment of a clearinghouse for collecting and evaluating existing instructional techniques and materials that effectively teach basic skills and for disseminating effective products and ideas statewide. (See pages 10 through 12.)

SECTION B. FINDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS

THE IMPLEMENTATION TIMETABLE

The 1976 Educational Accountability Act mandated that statewide high school graduation standards in mathematics and communications skills take effect in 1979. This deadline necessitated an incredibly strict schedule of events that created problems for everyone concerned.

For Department of Education testing personnel, the schedule permitted only about eighteen months to select and define the specific skills to be tested, to create the test, to establish passing scores, and to set up administration, scoring, and reporting procedures. By normal test development standards, this was an impossible task, even considering the considerable competence and initiative of the people assigned to it.

The schedule also created immense difficulties for already beleaguered teachers in high schools throughout Florida. The task of providing remedial instruction to eleventh graders who failed the test in 1977 fell to them, but they were also expected to continue to meet their normal responsibilities for teaching more advanced subjects. The infusion of State compensatory education funds was helpful, but even with these, it was not reasonable to expect schools that were designed and staffed to teach secondary-school subjects to tool up, in a matter of weeks, to undo deep-rooted, long-standing deficiencies in fundamental skills.

The problems created by the abrupt schedule for implementing the *Functional Literacy Test* were most severe for the members of Florida's high school graduating class of 1979. At the eleventh hour and with virtually no warning, these students were told that the requirements for graduation had been changed. They were suddenly required to pass a test constructed under the pressure of time and covering content that was presumed to be elementary but that their schools may or may not have taught them recently, well, or perhaps at all.

In retrospect, the Task Force believes that the schedule for implementing statewide high school graduation standards was too severe. We feel that most of the problems that are identified in later sections of this report are the result of trying to do too much in too little time. Consequently, we believe that the problems can and will be solved over time.

Unfortunately, the corrections that we envisage for the testing and remediation programs will not come soon enough to benefit present twelfth graders in Florida public schools. In view of the problems listed below, we do not believe that it would be fair to withhold diplomas from members of the graduating class of 1979 on the basis of scores on State tests. (See Recommendation 1a.)

1. It is not clear that the present *Functional Literacy Test* accurately identifies students who lack really essential skills.
2. Prior to 1977, when the test was first given, some Florida schools probably did not offer sufficiently good and recent instruction in the skills covered by the test to expect all students to demonstrate them.
3. Given the shortness of time available for designing remedial instruction for the students who failed the *Functional Literacy Test* in 1977, the diversity of the remedial programs offered around the State, and the lack of documentation as to the effectiveness of those programs, it is questionable whether the State provided each of those students with a good chance to compensate for his or her deficiencies.

We know that delaying implementation of the differentiated diplomas could damage the credibility of the testing program and, therefore, its potential to improve the teaching of basic skills by the schools. However, we feel that fairness to the students involved should take precedence over that possibility.

PUBLIC AND PROFESSIONAL REACTION TO STATEWIDE STANDARDS AND TESTING

Prior to the formation of the Task Force, individual members had heard rumors that there was widespread opposition to the concept of competency testing and that many citizens felt that the testing program should be abolished. However, we did not find these rumors to be true. During our public hearings around the State, we heard testimony from interested persons that was overwhelmingly positive. We heard numerous reports of renewed public interest in education and greater attention to school by students. We were left with the distinct feeling that the implementation of the testing program has provided an impetus for improving public education that is still gaining momentum and that, if taken advantage of in the ways suggested here, can lead to unprecedented benefits for the children of Florida.

RENAMING THE TEST

The Task Force is recommending that the name of the *State Student Assessment Test, Part II* be changed to the *Florida State High School Competency Test* before the test is administered again in 1979. (See Recommendation 1d.)

The original name of the test, the *Functional Literacy Test*, was abandoned by the State because of its connotations and inappropriateness. However, the original name is still widely used by the general public and the news media, and the new name, *State Student Assessment Test, Part II*, does not describe the test's intent or its contents. It is hoped that the proposed new name, *Florida State High School Competency Test*, is both clear in intent and simple enough to capture the public's fancy.

WHAT SKILLS SHOULD BE TESTED?

By definition, the 1977 *Functional Literacy Test* established an important part of the minimum standards for high school graduation in Florida. Hence, the decision as to what the test covered was critical. Using testimony from State Department of Education officials and experts in testing and assessment, the Task Force examined the validity of the content of the present *Functional Literacy Test*. This section presents our findings in this regard.

Presently, there are two schools of thought with respect to what a test required for high school graduation should cover. According to one viewpoint, such a test ought to concentrate upon "academic skills," that is, the skills that are traditionally taught in school. The other view is that "life skills" should be emphasized. By *life skills* it is meant those skills that a person really needs to have to function effectively in life. Tests developed under the two approaches are quite different because not everything taught in school is of immediate practical value to all students.

It can be inferred from the Legislature's use of the language *functional literacy* in describing the focus of the *Functional Literacy Test* that its intent was to emphasize life skills rather than academic skills. The validity of this inference is further suggested by the fact that *functional literacy* was later defined as "the ability to apply skills to *real-world situations*." With this in mind, the Task Force proceeded on the assumption that the purpose of the *Functional Literacy*

Test was to identify students who lacked the minimal skills needed to function effectively in society and we judged the content of the test against this criterion.

Appendix 4 lists the skills covered by the *Functional Literacy Test* given in 1977. It will be noted that only reading, writing, and mathematics skills are included. Although the Task Force believes that a high school graduate should certainly know and be able to do more than read, write, and do simple mathematics, we agree that these areas are of highest priority.

In judging the specific skills listed in Appendix 4, the primary question is, "Are the skills listed important enough for life to withhold a high school diploma from students who lack them?" A corollary question is, "Are there other mathematics and communications skills that are of higher priority than those listed?"

We had difficulty interpreting many of the skill statements. Skill 11 (Communication Skills–Reading) exemplifies one of the major problems. It states, "The student will in a real world situation, determine the main idea inferred from a [written] selection." (See Appendix 4.) Without more information, one cannot decide what is being called for or how important it is. Clearly, discerning the meaning of a passage extracted from an income-tax form is quite a different matter from getting the meaning from a bubble gum advertisement. Yet, test questions based on either of these tasks would qualify as measures of Skill 11. Statements of this kind need to be sharpened to be sure that they really define important applications of critical skills at minimum levels. [See Recommendation 3c(2) and 3c(4).]

We feel that some of the skills listed are not of high enough priority to warrant their inclusion on the test and that some more important skills are missing. For example, under mathematics, of the thirteen skills listed, four involve handling metric units, whereas only one explicitly involves making good estimates and none deal with determining probabilities. Although conversion to the metric system may be in the future, it is doubtful whether this justifies the level of emphasis given metric units. Furthermore, the need to make quick quantitative judgments is here now and is likely to continue to be important.

Reading, writing, and mathematics are the three skill areas included. Of these, we give reading and writing at least equal priority with mathematics. Yet of the twenty-four skills listed, thirteen are devoted to mathematics, eight to reading, and only three to writing. In part, this distribution reflects the fact that the mathematics skills are stated more specifically than those in communications. But we feel that the ability to read and especially the ability to write have not been given the relative attention that they deserve. We strongly doubt whether it is possible to assess adequately whether a student has the minimum ability to write on the basis of a test covering the writing skills as listed.

Our concern with the writing portion of the communications test was heightened when we found that the test does not require the student to do any actual writing. Instead, multiple-choice questions, assumed to be correlated to writing skills, are used exclusively. We understand the difficulty and expense of administering a test involving a sample of a student's writing, but we feel that this cost must be absorbed if writing ability is to be one of the skills assessed. (We think that it should be.) We were delighted to learn that the State Department of Education is experimenting with a writing test based upon an actual writing sample, and we urge that this work be completed and the results be used to build writing samples into future tests. [See Recommendation 3c(1).]

We also believe that it would be in order to reopen and debate the decision to concentrate on life skills rather than academic skills. Clearly, the life-skills route is a difficult one because it has yet to be shown that any particular skill is required for success in life. Furthermore, countless numbers of skills could be considered important and, depending upon their role in life, some people need different skills from others. Under these circumstances, establishing priorities on the basis of usefulness in life is most difficult. (See Recommendation 3b.)

When the decision about life skills and academic skills is made final, we suggest that the appropriateness of the skills currently covered by the *Functional Literacy Test* be reassessed. If the test is to continue to focus on life skills, we suggest that the reassessment be based principally upon a systematic analysis of what successful people really do. If such an analysis is not possible, the next best indicator would be testimony from successful laypersons as to what they actually do. [See Recommendation 3c(2).]

VALIDITY OF THE TEST

If we assume that the *Functional Literacy Test* is designed to measure life skills, then a critical characteristic of the test is the degree to which it accurately identifies students who are adequately proficient with respect to life skills. As yet, data on this subject are sparse, but there are some indicators.

A Department of Education supported study by Hills and King of Florida State University provided some support for the belief that scores on the *Functional Literacy Test* do relate to success in life. In this study, the 1977 test was administered to a group of citizens whose socioeconomic status was known. As can be seen in Table 1, those with high socioeconomic status tended to score higher on both parts of the test than those with low status. If one assumes that socioeconomic status is a valid standard for measuring success in life, these results suggest that test performance is generally related to success.

Table 1

ECONOMIC AND EDUCATIONAL CLASSIFICATION	NUMBER OF ADULTS	PERCENTAGE PASSED	
		Math	Communications
$5,000 income and low education	40	5	30
$5 to 14,000 income and middle education	75	35	72
$14,000 and up income and high education	70	77	87

A second implication of the Hills-King study is not so encouraging. Table 1 also indicates that large numbers of apparently successful individuals failed to pass the mathematics part of the test. This suggests that the mathematics test, as presently scored, is too difficult to be considered as a measure of minimum competency.

The results of the 1977 administration of the communications test suggests that that test, as scored, may not have been difficult enough to measure minimum reading and writing skills accurately. The 92% statewide passing rate means either that many students who do not read or write well passed the test or that the present public concern over reading and writing deficiencies

has no basis in fact. Considerable evidence suggests that the reading and writing problems are real, and therefore, that something was wrong with the communications test.

These results suggest to us that the difficulty level of the 1977 communications test was too low and that the level of the mathematics test was too high with the result that the test probably did not accurately identify students who lack minimum life skills in reading, writing, and mathematics. [See Recommendation 3c(3).] With this in mind, we are recommending that the following actions be taken.

1. The passing scores for both the mathematics and the communications portions of the test should be adjusted to reflect the performance on the tests by a sample of adult Florida citizens who are considered to be minimally successful in life. [See Recommendations 1b and 3c(2).]
2. Careful studies should continue to be conducted of the difficulty of individual items on each subtest, and appropriate adjustment should be made. [See Recommendation 3c(3).]

EXCEPTIONAL STUDENTS AND TESTING

A major concern in designing the testing program has been to avoid unfairness to exceptional students. In response to this concern, special provisions for protecting these students have been adopted by the State. These include the following:

1. Modifications in the way the test is administered are allowed for students with particular handicaps. For example, Braille test booklets are authorized for the blind. The policy establishes which modifications are permitted for which categories of exceptionality.
2. Exceptional students may be exempted from taking the *Functional Literacy Test* and may be granted a special high school diploma.

As far as we can determine, considerable effort has been made to implement the special provisions, and therefore, to prevent unfairness to exceptional students. However, some possible problems have surfaced.

First, different types of test administration modification are allowed for different kinds of exceptionality. If this procedure is to eliminate unfairness, it is essential that exceptional students be properly classified as to the nature of their exceptionality and that no students be classified as exceptional when they are not. There are some indications that the classification system may not be accurate in all cases. For example, in Florida presently, there are proportionately more black children in classes for the educable mentally retarded than in classes for the learning disabled. It has been suggested that this result may have come about by a tendency of some workers in the past to differentially classify white and black students who were borderline with respect to these two exceptionalities. If this is the case, since the two groups are authorized to receive different modifications in testing procedures, it could mean that some students are not receiving the proper modifications for their exceptionalities. (See Recommendation 1e.)

Second, some parents of exceptional children have expressed concern that the special diplomas that can be awarded to certain exceptional children may be equated by the public with the Certificate of Completion to be awarded to nonexceptional children who fail the *Functional Literacy Test*. This could be unfairly damaging to exceptional children and steps should be taken to eliminate this from happening. (See Recommendation 1e.)

CULTURAL BIAS

Charges have been made that the *Functional Literacy Test* is culturally biased, especially against blacks and Hispanics. The Task Force looked into this matter and found to the contrary. (See Recommendation 1f.) Our reasons are as follows:

1. Despite the fact that the 1977 test was administered in English, the statewide average performance by Hispanics was reasonable with respect to that of non-Hispanic students. Furthermore, when the performance by Hispanics on specific test questions is compared with that of non-Hispanic students, no alarming discrepancies are evident.
2. Although the average score for black children was significantly lower on the 1977 test than the average score for their white classmates, the relative performance of black children was quite uniform across individual test questions.

In testing, cultural bias is normally considered to be a situation in which the content of specific questions on a test give individuals of comparable ability in one group an unfair advantage over those in another group. Bias is usually measured by the difference in scores on particular test questions achieved by one cultural group as compared with those achieved by another group. Since the differences do not appear to be large with respect to black or Hispanic children, we conclude that the test given in 1977 was not biased against either group.

TEST-ADMINISTRATION PROCEDURES

If testing is to be consistent and fair, it is important that the test be administered in the same way everywhere and that no students have advance knowledge of the questions. Although the State Department of Education took care to insure that these matters were properly handled, the Task Force heard evidence that there were important breakdowns.

The 1977 Department of Education test-administration procedures called for students to take the test at one sitting and to have as much time as they needed. Yet within a single county, we found that some students had been given the test in short time segments separated by rest breaks and that a time limit had been imposed on others. In a second county, large numbers of answer sheets were mislaid after completion by students. This necessitated a second administration of the test at a later date. In a third county, a teacher used actual test items in preparing students for the test. These kinds of errors probably resulted in inflated test scores for some students and, therefore, favorable treatment of them.

The Task Force did not have sufficient time or resources to examine test-administration procedures in detail, and so we are not sure how widespread deviation from prescribed practice actually was. However, it is apparent that some students received an unfair advantage in this regard and that this warrants an adjustment in the procedures and their implementation prior to the next administration of the test. (See Recommendation 1g.)

TEST–CURRICULUM CONSISTENCY IN 1977

To the Task Force, a critical question was whether the students who took the *Functional Literacy Test* in 1977 had been given enough relevant prior instruction on the skills that the test called for. We felt that it would not be fair to expect students to demonstrate skills that they had not been taught recently or well. In particular, we did not feel that it would be justifiable to withhold diplomas from students who lack skills that had not been taught to them.

Although we were unable to make a comprehensive survey about their practices prior to 1977, we believe that many junior high schools throughout the State taught most of the skills included on the test but that there was considerable variation as to how much emphasis they gave to teaching each specific skill covered on the *Functional Literacy Test*. It also appears that few Florida high schools before 1977 included very many of these topics in courses taught in grades ten through twelve. We infer that many students who took the test in 1977 had not been taught very many of the skills on the test since they were in the ninth grade and had received no instruction on some of the skills since seventh grade. It is also likely that some students had never been taught some of the skills on the test such as check writing and road-map reading.

The fact that there probably were discrepancies between what students who took the test in 1977 had been taught and what they were tested on was one of the factors that led the Task Force to conclude that these students would be treated unfairly if diplomas were withheld from them on the basis of test results and to recommend that withholding diplomas be postponed for one year. (See Recommendation 1a.)

THE REMEDIAL PROGRAMS

When the results of the 1977 *Functional Literacy Test* became known, counties began efforts to provide remedial education to those who had failed. The remediation was aided by an increased appropriation of State compensatory-education funds that were distributed such that counties with high failure rates in State assessment tests received priority.

The Task Force was particularly interested in the quality of the remedial programs being offered throughout the State because we felt that their quality was a key to preventing unfairness to the first eleventh graders for whom the test was mandated. Consequently, in the fall of 1978, we asked numerous questions about remedial programs during our public hearings and visited a number of counties to observe what types of programs were then underway. Our findings and conclusions regarding those programs are as follows. (See Recommendation 4.)

1. In most, if not all, counties, considerable effort was put forth to remedy the deficiencies of those who failed the test in 1977. However, the nature and probably the quality of these efforts varied considerably from county to county.
2. There appeared to be little intercounty cooperation in dealing with the problems of remediation, and there was little cooperation among schools within some counties. Also, there was little monitoring of the instructional quality of county compensatory education programs by the State Department of Education. (All county plans calling for the expenditure of State funds were initially approved by the Department of Education, but this approval concentrated on budget matters rather than instructional procedures.) As a result, there was considerable duplication of effort and probably variation in quality among individual county programs. (See Recommendations 4a and 4c.)
3. In all cases observed, spot remediation was being practiced. That is, students were being coached on the specific skills represented by questions they missed on the 1977 test. While this type of teaching can be justified if well done, it could lead to learning isolated examples rather than general skills and this should be avoided. We understand that the State Department of Education is currently supporting a study that may shed some light on the generalizability of what is being learned. We commend this action and hope to include the study results in Part II of our report.

4. In some cases, students are having to stay after school or attend school during the summer in order to get remedial education. In other cases, time for remediation is obtained by having students drop one or more of their regular subjects or spend less time in them. These practices could be unfair to students who work or depend upon school-bus transportation and could be impairing the learning of other important skills and knowledge.
5. Staffing for remedial instruction for high school students was a serious problem in some counties. The problem was especially acute in the mathematics area. Among the solutions that some counties have used were transferring teachers from corresponding academic classes; using paraprofessionals or out-of-field teachers for remedial classes; enrolling students needing remediation in standard math and English classes and expecting regular subject teachers to provide special help; and paying a regular teacher extra salary to conduct remedial classes after school or in the summer. Clearly, the teaching in some of the counties suffered as a result of staffing procedures.
6. Some counties did not have sufficient resources to properly conduct the remediation that they considered necessary and chose to cut back on other instruction. Where this was necessary, the tendency was to reduce investments in elective areas, such as art and music, but key academic programs were affected as well. This was true in one of the three counties studied in this regard by a consultant. In that county, class sizes in standard subjects were increased to free teachers and space for remedial classes, elective courses in English and mathematics were discontinued, and purchases of instructional aids and materials were cut back. During a public hearing, the Superintendent of another county reported that salary increases for teachers had been denied to provide funds for the remedial program.
7. Instructional materials for eleventh grade remedial programs have been a major problem. In most places, materials presently owned by high schools are not really appropriate, and few directly relevant commercial materials are available for purchase. To fill the gap, some local groups have prepared materials, but these tend to be intuitively designed, in mimeographed or other simple format, and not yet verified by empirical testing.
8. A few counties are using very sophisticated systems for providing remedial instruction that are based on sound instructional principles, but development of those systems had begun long before the advent of functional-literacy testing. Most counties for whom remediation of basic skills is new have had to operate more or less intuitively during 1977 and 1978, using whatever was available.

Probably the best way to describe the present statewide remedial program is to say that it is sixty-seven individual county programs that vary widely in approach, quality, and degree of disruption caused to other important school functions.

While we applaud the initiative of the individual counties to provide remedial programs, we are concerned that there has not been more cooperation and coordination. Although there are some advantages to diversity, these come at the expense of cost effectiveness, efficiency, and probably equal treatment of students in different counties. For this reason, we are recommending that the State Department of Education begin monitoring county programs more closely and stimulate and sponsor cooperative efforts among counties and universities to develop, verify, and implement strategies and materials for effective remediation. (See Recommendation 4a.)

We are also recommending that a clearinghouse be established to provide a mechanism for collecting, evaluating, and disseminating statewide the good ideas and materials whose use is now limited. (See Recommendation 4c.)

We also feel that steps should be taken to monitor and maintain the quality of teaching of important subjects other than basic reading, writing, and mathematics. Although the improvement of basic skills is of paramount and immediate importance, we cannot let the accomplishment of that goal result in diminishment of quality in preparing students for college and vocational training and teaching students information and skills needed for personal fulfillment and good citizenship. (See Recommendation 4b.)

MEETING THE LONG-RANGE PROBLEM

The State now requires a passing score on the *Functional Literacy Test* as a condition for high school graduation. Since that test is now given in grades eleven and twelve, the high schools bear the principal burden for providing remedial instruction to students who are deficient. The Task Force believes that students should be required to demonstrate proficiency in basic skills earlier, with the result that any basic-skills remediation that is required is offered in the elementary and middle schools. (See Recommendations 2a and 2b.) Our reasons are as follows:

1. There is general agreement that children are most receptive to learning basic mathematics and communications skills before reaching high school age.
2. Teaching reading, writing, and mathematics skills to resistant individuals is difficult and intensive work that must be conducted over a long period of time. Much of the experience with trying to develop these skills quickly in adults is not very encouraging.
3. One of the reasons that mathematics and communications skills are important is that those skills are required for success in middle and high school. Concentrating remediation in the eleventh and twelfth grades ignores this point.
4. High schools are not designed or equipped to teach basic skills. This is made evident in at least three ways. First, the high school curriculum emphasizes preparation for college, vocational training, and general education. This means that there are few time or curricular slots into which basic-skills teaching can fit. Second, State-adopted, commercial textbooks for grades eight through twelve do not systematically include the topics covered in the *Functional Literacy Test* currently given in the eleventh grade. To achieve complete coverage of the topics, teachers would have to use parts of several books and possibly draw upon books designed for kindergarten through seventh grade. Although some locally generated high school materials do deal with the topics, the format of these materials tend to be rough and their teaching effectiveness has rarely been documented. Third, many middle school and most high school teachers tend to be specialists in subjects other than those emphasized by the *Functional Literacy Test*. In addition, many of the high school teachers are trained for, and accustomed to dealing with, content traditionally viewed as college preparatory and with students planning to go to a college or university. They often view their primary job as making sure that their students pass the College Board Examinations and gain admission to and be successful in a college or university. Hence, few high school teachers are primarily interested in offering basic education or are trained to do it well.

One way to solve these problems would be to reorient the objectives and curriculum of Florida high schools to emphasize the teaching of fundamental skills. However, we recommend against going too far in this direction because such an effort would likely be very disruptive of other important purposes of high school education, extremely expensive, and not necessarily effective.

Instead of continuing large-scale investment in basic-skills remedial programs at the high school level, we recommend that the State launch a planned, long-range effort to eliminate the need for remediation through (1) improving basic-skills teaching in kindergarten through sixth grade and (2) requiring that minimum-level basic skills be demonstrated by eighth grade. That plan is enunciated more fully in the next two sections. (See also Recommendations 2a and 2b.)

ADJUSTING THE FOCUS AND TIMING OF TESTING

As has been indicated, we believe that minimum basic skills can and should be taught such that virtually all students leave elementary grades with them and, consequently, that high schools should not have to be extensively involved in remedial instruction in basic skills. (See Recommendation 2a.) With this in mind, we propose that the State adjust its minimum-competency testing program such that its focus is upon preventing deficiencies from occurring rather than upon compensating for their occurrence. (See Recommendation 2b.)

The following is an overview of the restructured statewide testing program that we suggest be adopted for this purpose.

Kindergarten:	No test
Grade One:	No test
Grade Two:	Diagnostic test of reading, writing, and mathematics skills
Grade Three:	No test
Grade Four:	Diagnostic test of reading, writing, and mathematics skills
Grade Five:	No test
Grade Six:	First administration of *Primary Competency Test* of reading, writing, and mathematics skills
Grade Seven:	1. No test for students who have passed *Primary Competency Test* 2. Postremedial readministration of *Primary Competency Test* for those who have not yet passed
Grade Eight:	1. No test for students who have passed *Primary Competency Test* 2. Postremedial readministration of *Primary Competency Test* for those who have not yet passed 3. Students who have not passed test by end of eighth grade treated as shown in Table 2

Table 2

TEST RESULTS	EFFECT ON STUDENT
Fail mathematics and communications	repeat eighth grade with heavy remediation in basic skills
Fail communications only	repeat eighth grade with heavy remediation in basic skills
Fail mathematics only	pass to ninth grade, but stay in remedial math course until passed

Grade Nine: No test
Grade Ten: First administration of *High School Competency Test*
Grade Eleven: Postremedial readministration of *High School Competency Test* for students who have not yet passed
Grade Twelve: Postremedial readministration of *High School Competency Test* for students who have not yet passed; diplomas withheld from students unable to pass test by end of twelfth grade

The principal new feature of the adjusted testing program described above is the *Primary Competency Test*. This test would be administered for the first time in the sixth grade, with readministrations in seventh and eighth grades for those who need them. The test would be designed to assess students' competency of the reading, writing, and mathematics skills at the level required to do satisfactory high school work. We believe that required demonstration of these skills at this level is appropriate, and we feel that these skills can and should be taught early and well enough to equip virtually all students to pass the *Primary Competency Test* before the end of the eighth grade. The accomplishment of this goal would remove the major barrier now preventing high schools from properly carrying out their responsibilities for vocational and general education and for preparing able students for college. It would also permit the broadening of the *High School Competency Test* to include important knowledge and skills other than basic mathematics and communication, thus insuring that high school graduates have a well-rounded education. (See Recommendation 3a.)

It should also be noted that the adjusted testing program moves the *High School Competency Test* from eleventh grade to tenth grade and eliminates the present eleventh grade *Basic Skills Test*. Our reason for recommending the earlier administration point for competency testing is to give schools and students more time before high school graduation is denied to correct any deficiencies uncovered. There are two reasons for recommending the deletion of the eleventh grade *Basic Skills Test*. First, since, as given now, the *Basic Skills Test* results correlate very well with those of the present *Functional Literacy Test*, we believe that it is not now cost effective to give both tests in the same grade. Second, if the other elements of the adjusted testing program are adopted, students will have demonstrated minimum basic-skill competency long before the eleventh grade and this will render the test obsolete. (See Recommendation 1c.)

To prevent unfairness and to allow time for necessary test and instructional development, we suggest that the adjusted testing program not be adopted abruptly, but rather that it be phased in over a period of time. A rough schedule of the highlights for such a phasein is given below.

Fall 1979	*Functional Literacy Test* moved to grade ten; eleventh grade *Basic Skills Test* eliminated; *Basic Skills Tests* given in grades two, four, six, and eight
1983	*Primary Competency Test* given in sixth grade for first time
1984	First readministration of the *Primary Competency Test* in seventh grade
1985	*Primary Competency Test* readministered in eighth grade for first time; eighth grade *Basic Skills Test* dropped; first implementation of new promotion policy

IMPROVING INSTRUCTION – THE REAL KEY

The fundamental purpose of the testing program is to improve the quality of teaching in Florida classrooms. The assumption is that improved teaching will naturally follow from the establishment of standards created as a result of testing. But if instruction is really to improve, better teaching procedures and materials must be designed and implemented. And, if the quality and quantity of the improvements are to be reasonably consistent statewide and the design work is to be cost effective, this work cannot be left entirely to individual county school systems working in isolation. With this in mind, the Task Force recommends that the State launch and support a statewide, cooperative effort to perfect better systems for instruction in mathematics, reading, and writing, especially for kindergarten through sixth grade. (See Recommendation 2a.) We suggest that these efforts be organized as follows:

1. Establish one or more centers in which systems for improving the teaching of basic skills can be designed. Policies for each center's activities should be set by a consortium of individuals from the State Department of Education, State universities, and school districts throughout the State. The staff should include the best people available statewide from any source.
2. Within each center, launch projects to develop new, alternate, optimal systems of instruction or to upgrade existing systems. As part of the development process, prototype systems should be developed and tested under classroom conditions in counties throughout the State. Testing and revision of the prototype systems should continue until they have been shown empirically to improve students' performance across the full diversity of classroom conditions in the State.
3. When the effectiveness of an alternate system has been learner verified, make it available to county school systems and provide specific training for teachers in its proper use.

We believe that a concentrated development effort of this kind would have several distinct advantages over the present practice of leaving instructional improvement entirely to the individual counties. First, the availability of a statewide talent pool would likely result in a staff with better qualifications than can be assembled by most counties. Second, the duplication of effort inherent in the county-by-county approach would be reduced, and this would greatly increase cost effectiveness. Third, centers' projects would be of sufficient size to permit quantity purchasing and other economies of scale. Fourth, the work would be done by interagency teams and use of the products would be optional with counties, and, therefore, these advantages could be gained with no diminishment of local control of Florida schools.

COMPARING 1977 AND 1978 *FUNCTIONAL LITERACY TEST* SCORES

In October, 1978, the *Functional Literacy Test* was administered to all students then enrolled in the eleventh grade and to those twelfth graders who had failed the test in 1977 or did not take it then. As this report is being written, results for fall 1978 are beginning to become available. As yet, information is too fragmentary for thorough analysis, but some general observations can be made.

Overall, it appears that a larger percentage of the eleventh graders who took the *Functional Literacy Test* in 1978 passed than was the case in 1977. Furthermore, it appears that a considerable number of the twelfth graders who failed the test in 1977 achieved a passing score in 1978.

What is the reason for the seemingly better performance on the test by students in 1978? It is tempting to assume that the gains in scores resulted from improved teaching of basic skills, and this may indeed be the case. However, a number of other possibilities need to be considered as well. (See Recommendation 1h.) These include the following:

1. The 1978 version of the test could have been less difficult than the 1977 version and therefore yielded higher scores. Since almost two-thirds of the questions on the 1978 test were new, this possibility cannot be ignored.
2. On the basis of chance alone, students who score below the average on a test tend to improve upon retesting. This factor probably affects the scores for twelfth graders who retook the test in 1978 after failing it in 1977.
3. Between test administrations, students could have learned how to take tests better.
4. Students may have worked harder in school since the testing program began.

Some of the factors that may have contributed to the apparent improvement in test scores from 1977 to 1978 clearly relate to increased learning of communications and mathematics skills, and some do not. Thus, to draw conclusions as to the educational implications of the data, we must sort out which factors are actually relevant to improved learning and teaching and the degree to which those factors were actually operating. If the concept of the accountability program is operating as it should, we would expect such an analysis to show that the apparent gains in scores were related to increased learning rather than to chance, changes in the test, and other factors that are not relevant.

It will be mid-1979 before enough information is available to permit an evaluation of the meaning of changes in scores from 1977 to 1978. We expect to shed some light on this subject in Part II of our report, which will be released later, and the State Department of Education expects to do their own analyses. Until complete analyses have been made, we urge that everyone concerned reserve judgment in this area. We also stress the importance of doing analytical research on literacy-test results and the need for support of continued research of this type.

APPENDIX 1
SPEAKERS AT TASK FORCE PUBLIC HEARINGS

SPEAKER	IDENTIFICATION
	Clearwater September 27, 1978
Kathy Betancourt	Hillsborough County Classroom Teachers' Association
John Brady	Parent
Gloria Bruckart	Parent
Al Davis	Parent
Oren Doyle	Tampa Urban League, Inc.
John R. Espey	Pinellas County School Board
Rebekah Fleischaker	Student, Pinellas Park High School
Robert Gemmer	Educational Chairman, Florida Chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People; Chairman, Council on Human Relations, City of St. Petersburg
Steve Hanlon	Attorney, Bay Area Legal Services
Howard Hinesley	Assistant Superintendent for Exceptional Education, Pinellas County Public Schools; Council for Exceptional Children
Katie Keene	Member, Florida Parent Teacher Association Board of Managers
A.G. Nichols	Taxpayer
Donna Skibo	Self
Tomie Stover	Parent
Claire Sullivan	Teacher Superintendent of Secondary Education, Pinellas County Public Schools
Clarence Wingrove	President, Hernando County Classroom Teachers Association
	Orlando September 28, 1978
Tim Adams	Florida People United to Save Humanity
Clarence C. Corbett	Florida Education Association-United
Jane Doe (fictitious name)	Parent
Albert D'Orsi	Substitute teacher, retired teacher, retired military
Don Magruder	Executive Director, Florida School Board Association, Inc.
Rep. Clark Maxwell, Jr.	Florida House of Representatives
James T. Mitchell	Parent
Janie J. Mitchell	President, Jones High School Parent Teacher Association
Mara Pickens	English teacher, Lake County
Cynthia Shoemaker	Lake County Educational Association
Wardell Sims	Taxpayer, parent
Cornell Williams	Self
Willie Williams	Member, Orange County Chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People; member, Jones High School Advisory Council
	Fort Lauderdale October 2, 1978
Irma E. Allen	Citizen, retired teacher
Robert E. Allen, Sr.	Retired teacher
Walter Bryant	Citizen
Bo Donly	Representative, State Advisory Council on Adult and Community Education
Helen B. Franke	Palm Beach County School Board
Marjorie Head	President, Broward County Classroom Teachers' Association
Harold C. Mosser	Director of High Schools, Broward County Public Schools
William R. Myers	Director of Evaluation, Broward County Public Schools
Jerry Roberts	Citizen
John Tripp	Citizen
Dollye G. Woodside	Chairman, Broward County School Board

SPEAKER	IDENTIFICATION
	Fort Myers October 3, 1978
Valera S. Barker	Elementary Supervisor, Collier County Public Schools; member, Florida Council on Elementary Education
Kenneth Henderson	Citizen; Professor Emeritus, College of Education, University of Illinois
Gerri Kalvin	Chairman, Collier County School Board
Ray V. Pottorf	Superintendent, Lee County Public Schools; member, Florida Association of District School Superintendents
Wendell Rollason	Director, Redlands Christian Migrant Association
Richard Stewart	Assistant Superintendent, Instructional Support, Lee County Public Schools
Donald R. Wakeley	Parent
	Jacksonville October 9, 1978
Don Cameron	Executive Director, Florida Teaching Profession-National Education Association
June Epperson	Member, Columbia County School Board; member, Florida School Board Association
Randall Hewitt	Superintendent, Lafayette County Public Schools
Robert B. Johnson	Member, Nassau County School Board
Dr. David Lusk	Assistant Superintendent, Program and Pupil Evaluation, Duval County Public Schools
Bruce Smathers	Citizen
Altow W. Yates	Member, Florida Education Council
	Panama City October 10, 1978
Milton Acton	Director of Instruction, Bay County Public Schools
Eileen Arpke	President, Florida Council of Teachers of English
Robyn Bennett	Student, Bay High School
Frank Biasco	Member, Escambia County School Board
Cheryl Burton	Student, Rutherford High School
Art Davis	President, Association of Bay County Educators
Dorothy Frances	Counselor, Rutherford High School
Dan Gall	School Psychologist, Bay County School System
Randy Godsell	Student, Mosley High School
Alma Jones	Student, Bay High School
James Lyles	Student, Rutherford High School
John May	Principal, Everitt Junior High School
Russell Oltz	Head, Mosley High School Math Department
Mike Segler	Student, Bay High School
Barbara Seibel	Student, Mosley High School
J. Shipbaugh	Junior Guidance Counselor, Mosley High School
McPherson Smith	Student, Rutherford High School
Mary Alma Sparks	Parent, university student
Michael Stephenson	Student, Rutherford High School
Amber Thomas	Student, Rutherford High School
Maurice Thomas	Student, Rutherford High School
Jay Trumbull	Student, Bay High School
Elizabeth Wyatt	Student, Mosley High School
Lillian H. Young	Vice-Chairman, Walton County School Board

APPENDIX 2
EXPERTS TESTIFYING TO THE TASK FORCE

SPEAKER	IDENTIFICATION	TOPIC
Dr. Peter Airasian	Associate Professor, School of Education, Boston College	Educational Testing
Dr. Eva Baker	Director, Center for the Study of Evaluation, University of California at Los Angeles	
Dr. J. Ward Keesling	Systems Development Corporation	
Dr. Frank Banghart	Director, Educational Systems and Planning Center, Florida State University	Resource Allocation
Dr. Henry Brickell	Director, Policy Studies in Education, Academy for Educational Development	Competency Testing Educational Policy
Ms. Sylvia Collins Ms. Betty Oates Mrs. Mary Stevenson Mr. Stuart Weinstein	Graduate Assistants for the Task Force, Florida State University	County Remedial Efforts
Dr. Tom Denmark	Professor, Mathematics, Florida State University	Mathematics Instructional Materials
Dr. E.L. Edwards, Jr.	Associate Director of Mathematics, Virginia State Department of Education	Principles of Mathematics
Dr. Tom Fisher	Director, State Assessment, Florida State Department of Education	State Assessment System Procedures
Dr. John Fremer	Director, Test Development, Elementary and Secondary School Programs, Educational Testing Service	Developing Functional Literacy Test Items
Dr. Robert Gagné	Professor, Instructional Design and Development, Florida State University	Design of Remedial Instruction
Dr. Kenneth Henderson	Professor Emeritus, College of Education, University of Illinois	Remediation and County Instructional Programs
Dr. Shirley Hill	Professor, Mathematics Education, University of Missouri; President, National Council of Teachers of Mathematics	Mathematics in Assessment
Mr. Sy Holzman	Executive Assistant, Office of the Secretary, Florida State Department of State	Potential Public Reactions to the Certificate of Completion
Dr. Robert Lathrop	Professor and Director, Career Education Center, Florida State University	Issues in Test Building
Dr. Edward Ortleb	Science Supervisor, Saint Louis, Missouri, Public Schools; President, National Science Teachers Association	Assessment and Science Teaching
Dr. Al Purves	Director, Curriculum Laboratory, University of Illinois at Urbana/Champagne; Vice-President, National Council of Teachers of English	Assessment and English Teaching

SPEAKER	IDENTIFICATION	TOPIC
Mr. Philip Rountree	Administrator, Compensatory Education and Alternative Education, Florida State Department of Education	The Florida Compensatory Education Program
Dr. David Westling	Assistant Professor, Special Education, Florida State University	Provisions for Exceptional Students
Ms. Cynthia Thiebaud	Graduate Assistant for the Task Force, Florida State University	
Dr. Pamela Williams	Director, Reading Clinic, Florida State University	Instructional Materials in Reading
Dr. Paul Williams	Superintendent, Test Development, Virginia State Department of Education; Representative, National Council of the Social Studies	Assessment and Teaching of Social Studies
Rep. Walter Young	Chairman, Education Committee, Florida House of Representatives	Legislative Intent for the Assessment Program

APPENDIX 3
LIST OF WRITTEN REPORTS TO THE TASK FORCE

AUTHOR	IDENTIFICATION	TITLE OF REPORT
Dr. Peter Airasian	Associate Professor, School of Education, Boston College	"Panel Statement on the Florida Functional Literacy Test"
Dr. Eva Baker	Director, Center for the Study of Evaluation, University of California at Los Angeles	
Dr. J. Ward Keesling	Systems Development Corporation	
Dr. Frank Banghart	Director, Educational Systems and Planning Center, Florida State University	"A Report on the Adequacy of Resources Available to Implement the Accountability Programs"
Ms. Sylvia Collins Ms. Betty Oates Mrs. Mary Stevenson Mr. Stuart Weinstein	Graduate Assistants for the Task Force, Florida State University	"A Report of On-Site Visits to Determine the Efficacy of the Florida Compensatory Education Programs"
Dr. Tom Denmark	Professor, Mathematics, Florida State University	"State Assessment Mathematics Test: Part II Related Instructional Materials"
Dr. Arnhilda Gonzalez-Quevedo	Professor, Bilingual Education, Florida International University; member, State Spanish Speaking Populace Commission	"Florida State Minimum Performance Standard Test and Its Effect on Limited English Language Proficiency"
Dr. Kenneth Henderson	Professor Emeritus, College of Education, University of Illinois	"Disruptions in County Instructional Programs"
Dr. Shirley Hill	Professor, Mathematics Education, University of Missouri; President, National Council of Teachers of Mathematics	"Mathematics and Minimal Competency Testing"
Dr. John Hills	Professor, Educational Research, Development, and Foundations, Florida State University	"Construct Validity of the Florida *Functional Literacy Test*"
Dr. F.J. King	Professor, Educational Research, Development, and Foundations, Florida State University	
Mr. Sy Holzman	Executive Assistant, Office of the Secretary, Florida State Department of State	"Post-Secondary School Educational and Employment Options for Students Receiving Certificates of Completion"
Dr. J.L. Jones	Superintendent, Dade County Schools	"Position on Testing"
Dr. Edward Ortleb	Science Supervisor, Saint Louis, Missouri, Public Schools; President, National Science Teachers Association	"Statement Delivered to the State Task Force on Basic Education"
Dr. Chris Pipho	Associate Director, Department of Research and Information, Education Commission of the States, Colorado	"State Activity: Minimum Competency Testing"

AUTHOR	IDENTIFICATION	TITLE OF REPORT
Dr. Al Purves	Director, Curriculum Laboratory, University of Illinois at Urbana/Champagne; Vice-President, National Council of Teachers of English	"Statement to Florida Task Force on Educational Assessment Programs"
Mr. Fred Schultz	Chairman, Florida Educational Council	"Addendum to Improving Achievement in Basic Skills"
Dr. Henry Tolbert (Submitted by the Rev. C.K. Steele)	Educational Committee, Southern Christian Leadership Council, Tallahassee, Florida Member, Florida Task Force on Educational Assessment Programs	"The Controversy Remains: Unresolved Issues Regarding the Validity of the Florida *State Student Assessment Test, Part II* (Formerly the *Functional Literacy Test*)"
Dr. David Westling Ms. Cynthia Thiebaud	Assistant Professor, Special Education, Florida State University Graduate Assistant for the Task Force, Florida State University	"Problems and Issues Related to Minimum Performance Testing and Exceptional Students in the State of Florida"
Dr. Pamela Williams	Director, Reading Clinic, Florida State University	"Adequacy of Instructional Materials Available to Teach Basic Skills"

APPENDIX 4: FUNCTIONAL LITERACY SKILLS

FUNCTIONAL LITERACY TEST 1977-78

The 1977-78 Grade 11 Functional Literacy Test covers the 24 skills listed below with a total of 117 items. The items represent the practical application of certain academic skills. The primary difference between the Basic Skills Test and the Functional Literacy Test is in the way the questions are stated. The Functional Literacy Test questions are developed from real world situations and problems while the basic skills items are standard academic exercises.

Development of the Functional Literacy Test was conducted with the assistance of an outside contractor, Educational Testing Service of Princeton, New Jersey. The test, administered in October, 1977, was extensively pre-tested in Florida and then revised where necessary.

Passing the Functional Literacy Test is required for graduation, so thorough test security measures were instituted. The booklets arrived in sealed packages and each booklet was sealed. Each school was responsible for its supply of booklets and returned them for destruction.

Definition

For the purposes of the 1977-78 Statewide Assessment Program, functional literacy is the ability to apply basic skills in reading, writing, and arithmetic to problems and tasks of a practical nature as encountered in everyday life.

Functional Literacy Skills

Skill	Communication Skills - Reading
11	The student will in a real world situation, determine the main idea inferred from a selection.
12	The student will, in a real world situation, find who, what, where, which, and the how of information in a selection.

16 The student will, in a real world situation, determine the inferred cause and effect of an action.

20 The student will, in a real world situation, distinguish between facts and opinions.

21 The student will, in a real world situation, identify an unstated opinion.

26 The student will, in a real world situation, identify the appropriate source to obtain extensive information on a topic.

28 The student will, in a real world situation, use an index to identify the location of information requiring the use of cross-references.

29 The student will use highway and city maps.

Skill **Communication Skills - Writing**

32 The student will include the necessary information when writing letters to supply or request information.

33 The student will complete a check and its stub accurately.

34 The student will accurately complete forms used to apply for a driver's license, employment, entrance to a school or training program, insurance, and credit.

Skill **Mathematics**

17 The student will determine the elapsed time between two events stated in seconds, minutes, hours, days, weeks, months, or years.

24 The student will determine equivalent amounts of up to one hundred dollars using coins and paper currency.

30 The student will determine the solution to real world problems involving 1 or 2 distinct whole number operations.

32 The student will determine the solution to real world problems involving decimal fractions or percents and one or two distinct operations.

33 The student will determine the solution to real world problems involving comparison shopping.

34 The student will determine the solution to real world problems involving rate of interest and the estimation of the amount of simple interest.

35 The student will determine the solution to real world problems involving purchases and a rate of sales tax.

36 The student will determine the solution to real world problems involving purchases and a rate of discount given in fraction or percent form.

37 The student will solve a problem related to length, width, or height using metric or customary units up to kilometers and miles, conversion within the system.

38 The student will solve a problem involving the area of a rectangular region using metric or customary units.

39 The student will solve a problem involving capacity using units given in a table (milliliters, liters, teaspoons, cups, pints, quarts, gallons), conversion within the system.

40 The student will solve a problem involving weight using units given in a table (milligrams, grams, kilograms, metric tons, ounces, pounds, tons), conversion within the system.

41 The student will read and determine relationships described by line graphs, circle graphs, and tables.

APPENDIX 5
LIST OF DOCUMENTS SUPPLIED TO THE TASK FORCE

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State of Florida, Department of Education. *What are the Newspapers Saying?* No date.

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